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THE LINDE COLLECTION

A SMALL collection, of less than a hundred pictures, more readily reveals the owner's intent than a large conglomeration of canvases. Mr. Linde's collection has for its definite object the garnering of the work of the younger American painters, only a few of the older men being represented.

There is a story which tells us that the leader of one hundred and twenty sheep obstinately plunged into a fissure in the ice while crossing a Western stream last winter, and was followed to his death by every member of the flock.

The blind loyalty and devotion manifested by sheep while treading in the wake of their horned general, who often behaves as if he had been browsing on foolish powders, have frequently brought their sanity into question; but, all things considered, it may be doubted whether they are more servile imitators than thousands of men and women who are supposed to be possessed of a higher order of intelligence than the brute.

A few short years ago everybody was laughing at the artists of the impressionist school, and applauding the realists. Then somebody—nobody knows who—declared authoritatively that paint splattered on a canvas with a white-wash brush was the real thing and that Meissonier was a photographer. Whereupon many turned their backs on Meissonier and discovered rare beauties in masses of vivid color, not necessarily in purple cows and barber-pole trees, but in things that were interchangeable, objects that looked like cows at one moment and like trees the next. And so came the reversible landscape. If you don't fancy the water in the foreground, make a sky of it—by turning the picture upside down.

Many people follow this invisible leadership, and enthuse over Monet or Goya, who could not, without a label, distinguish the work of either of them from a circus poster. For there are fads in art, which have to be followed.

Movements in art itself change, as fashions in dress change with succeeding epochs, and when extreme impressionism had had its day, the time soon came when it was said with some truth, in the words of Paul Artot: "Impressionism does not think. It is a large eye set in an empty skull; it looks without seeing; it does not take the time to see."

Some art movements, however, are not started by the imitation of an invisible leader so much as by the compelling force of the products of a certain art expression, or school, or country. Take, for instance, the present popularity of the Dutch school. No one man fostered it, but when American buyers were made fully acquainted with these modern masters, at the time of the Chicago Fair, the Canadians had for years been collecting their works.

The painters of America are now having a somewhat similar experience, although in their case, while some discerning connoisseurs have hailed our own men with favor from the first, the general public—the sheep—would have none of them, but turned to foreign trash with avidity. It must be remembered that the first general recognition of the excellence of our landscape men came from Paris; again showing that prophets are not without honor save in their own country.

Tempora mutantur, and we change with the times. I was told only the other day that a prominent Western dealer is deserting his foreign pictures to devote his entire business to the handling of American canvases.

Mr. J. E. Linde, nevertheless, may be regarded as a pioneer, in this respect: he does not so much collect the works of men who have already arrived at a certain stage of public favor, but prefers to gather the works of those at present less known, and of those "just arriving." That his judgment is keen is proved by his collection (at his home in Hoboken, New Jersey), which though commenced only a

The Linde Collection

half a dozen years ago, possesses works which attest to the soundness of his selection. This is shown by the four canvases by Albert L. Groll. Groll is coming markedly to the front these days, but five years ago, when few had ever heard of this strong man, Mr. Linde already possessed two of his examples. The same instance is repeated in the work of Emil Carlsen, who has only lately become recognized as a master among us—there are half a dozen of his canvases in the Linde collection.

Let us look at the principal paintings. The six canvases by Emil Carlsen range from his incomparable still life subjects to his masterly landscapes. "In October" shows a stretch of country in glorious autumn colors, not so lurid as we usually find the season depicted but carrying the *plein air* of a bright fall day with wonderful truthfulness. "The Rising Storm" may be considered Carlsen's masterpiece. There is the juxtaposition of a yellow wheatfield, with shocks standing about and a dark clump of trees, and ominous clouds rushing onward. It is the hush before the storm. The foliage imperceptibly trembles, as the first whispers of the speeding hurricane announce a possible convulsion of nature. The "Moonlight" does not quite "hang together," as the composition is disturbed by the tree arrangement but if the artist intended to depict the clear moonlight finding a path between the trees, he succeeded. "Une Plumeuse" has a splendid array of *natura morte*, such as no American artist can equal. Chase used to be our greatest still-life painter, but Carlsen has far surpassed him.

Albert L. Groll's "Sandy Hook"—familiar at exhibitions—is owned by Mr. Linde. Once before I have fully described and praised this excellent canvas. The artist shows also his adaptability to the varied phrases of nature in his "Oaks," his "Autumn," and in a "Gray Day," all full of atmosphere and well constructed.

Among several examples by Charles Schreyvogel, there are four in which this

popular painter of frontier-life is at his best. "Doomed," "Standing Them off," "An Unexpected Enemy" and "Breaking Through the Circle," all indicate the stirring scenes of Indian warfare with which Schreyvogel's name is coupled; anecdotal pictures, forsooth, but the technique, the vigorous action, the expressive drawing make us forget to label them thus derisively.

Another Indian painter is not so much the recorder of actions as the portrayer of the poetic side of aboriginal life. "The Toiler of the Plain," and "The Sandhills," by E. W. Deming, contain a sense of mystery that appeals to the mind and transports it to the lost hunting-grounds and the melancholy fate of the rovers of the plains.

Another aboriginal subject, an "Indian at the Fire," by E. I. Couse, is worthy of the artist's fame, and Mr. Linde is also the possessor of a magnificent collection of Indian basketry, costumes, household furnishings and weapons, to which I can here only allude.

Last year's Academy Exhibition had a rarely fine nude painting by Warren B. Davis, which found a home here. "The Heart of the Forest" shows a female figure seated on the sward of a clearing. The *morbidezza* of the figure is rich and dusky, the pose and painting refined and delicate. It is one of the best paintings of the nude I know—perfect in drawing, beautiful. Mr. Davis has also here a smaller canvas, one of his charming scenes of *la vie intime* of a young girl, called "The Betrothal Ring."

Two canvases by Carleton Wiggins, one of the older men represented in the collection, prove him one of our best cattle painters. Another of the older men is A. T. Van Laer, although his landscape "Near Litchfield, Connecticut," is too reminiscent of Murphy to be acceptable. This artist can do much better by remaining individual. Nor can I admire fully the "Landscape," by Bruce Crane, but the one by Frank De Haven contains his tonal quality at its best.

The Collector and Art Critic

A "Winter Landscape," by Peter Schmaus next attracts our attention. It is noteworthy for the just values in his snow painting, while the composition is out of the ordinary, and striking. "October," as seen by Cullen Yates, is the season of the sere and yellow leaf; and David B. Walkley gives us a glimpse of a Holland canal in his "Below the Dam." Mathias Sandor has been unusually successful in his "In the Gloaming"; and William Ritschel's beach scenes at Katwyk are of the best products of his brush.

In Newark, New Jersey, resides H. August Schwabe, an artist of whom New Yorkers have rarely heard, although he has passed the three-score mark. Perhaps it is because his paintings have such local popularity that no opportunity is offered to see them at our metropolitan exhibitions. Be this as it may, the half dozen canvases that are in the Linde collection, such as "The Sentinel," "The Pioneer," the "Lady with a Fan," "The Greaser," and "Grandmother," reveal a man whose method is reminiscent of academic traits.

W. Granville-Smith is an artist to whose work I have occasionally directed attention. It is fifteen years since I first saw a color illustration by this man in "Truth," a periodical which has unfortunately ceased to exist. The plate was too pretty, but there was revealed in it a color sense of delicate refinement, impeccable drawing, and artistry of composition—it only lacked strength. Mr. Smith has retained and developed his good qualities and acquired the absent one. His work is becoming more and more vigorous, and its prettiness is augmented by greater breadth of technique. The two examples in this collection, "Greenpoint" and "Drying the Nets," leave little to be desired.

One of the latest arrivals in the New York art world is Carl Rungius, a painter of moose and caribou and Northwestern scenery. His "Alaska Moose" shows a bull and a cow moose standing among the bare poles of a fire swept forest. It

is a faithful document of American scenery. This artist will very soon be more widely known.

The collection also contains a number of examples by our younger figure painters, as Charles W. Hawthorne, Robert D. Gauley, William Schneider, F. Luis Mora, Genjiro Yeto, and also W. Florian. Each of these men is characteristically represented. The art of Robert David Gauley is shown in a good "Dutch Interior," that of William Schneider in one of his attractive girl heads, and that of Genjiro Yeto in a picturesque Japanesque composition, entitled, "When the Cherries are in Bloom." The "Lady in Yellow," by Hawthorne, is painted in the free and colorful manner of the artist. The interior by which F. Luis Mora is represented shows an artist at work in his studio with a posing model. It is a delightful composition of great merit.

Mr. Linde is adding to his collection some small bronzes of American wild animals, the nucleus being furnished by Schreyvogel, Rungius and Deming, men who are better known as painters than as sculptors, but who are also proficient in the plastic art.

Although I spoke, perhaps facetiously, of leadership, at the beginning of this article, I now—as the moral of it all—point with satisfaction to Mr. Linde's canvases as a worthy example of a thoroughly American collection. It was not gathered because of the accredited strength of the names, and yet some of these names will soon be on the lips of those who buy nothing but names. There is a great fascination in this kind of collecting, and I can assure those who are thinking of following Mr. Linde's example, there is also pleasure and profit.

Train Delayed by a "Landscape"

(The New York Times)

A recent visitor from Brazil stated that at one stage of a journey in the interior he was materially delayed by the presence of a "landscape" on the railway line.